

Remarks

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner:

(1) rejected claims 39 and 48-55 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention;

(2) rejected claims 1, 2 and 39 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Lemmen (5,327,902) ("Lemmen");

(3) indicated that claims 3-15, 18-38, 40-42, 45-47 and 56-62 are allowable over the prior art of record; and

(4) indicated that claims 48-55 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

Turning first to Item (3), Applicants thank the Examiner for his indication that claims 3-15, 18-38, 40-42, 45-47 and 56-62 are allowed.

In response to Item (2) above, Applicants have canceled claims 1, 2 and 39 in order to expedite issuance of the allowed (or allowable) subject matter. Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of these canceled claims in one or more continuation applications.

In response to Items (1) and (4) above, Applicants have amended claims 48 and 55 to overcome the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. More particularly, Applicants have removed the word "means" after the words "flexible connector". Additionally, Applicants have canceled claim 39 as noted above. Thus, claims 48-55 are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 3-15, 18-38, 40-42 and 45-62 are now in condition for allowance, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested.

In the event that any fees may be required in this matter, please charge the same to Deposit Account No. 16-0221.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

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